

And yet, to pass from the quality of apparel, there will generally be effected a congruity between the inner man and the impression produced by his appearance. Shakespeare is not a copier of nature; he is rather, to those who know him most truly, the voice of nature herself. It cannot have been a desire for stage-effect; it can have been nothing but fidelity to nature, which has made him clothe so many of his characters in mortal circumstance exactly expressing their nobility and worth, or their slavishness and dishonour. It would make an inconveniently long list if I were to mention the names of the characters in the several plays whose personal appearance is as good as an index to the various qualities of which the characters are representatives. My readers will remember many for themselves. How striking the contrast between Hamlet's Father and his Uncle, in the celebrated passage, beginning

"Look here, upon this picture, and on this;
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers."

And in the opening scene of *Cymbeline*, Posthumus Leonatus is thus spoken of;

"I do not think
So fair an outward, and such stuff within,
Endows a man but he."

In a comparison of Shakespeare's characters with the hints here and there given as to their personal appearance, there is large material for the study of physiognomy. Of course, all my readers will remember the minute inquiry the jealous Cleopatra made about the appearance of her rival, Octavia, so that she might form some notion of the kind and degree of influence Antony's new Roman wife was likely to exert upon him. And these are but one or two of similar passages which occur to memory as I write.

There is nothing which I am not at liberty to write about; for everything in the world being either outside or inside, my subject knows no limitations. I might have called it *Things in General*. This is the very paradise of modern essay-writers—to have found a subject about which they are not obliged to stick too closely; whose tether is long enough to allow them a large circle to browse in. For the essay-writer's mind in general is digressive. He should not be too long confined to any fixed course of thought—he should be allowed to follow the scent of all flowers that bloom within his fancy. He should, above all things have an eye for what has happily been called "the infinite suggestiveness of common things." And if he has, and has, further, a tongue for the infinite ex-